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RHMFSS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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SUBJECT: Santiago Dec. 9 Media Report

Chile-U.S.

¶1. Governor of Minnesota Tim Pawlenty will meet with President Michelle Bachelet, Minister of Energy Marcelo Tokman, and Santiago Mayor Pablo Zalaquett on Thursday. Governor Pawlenty is heading a trade delegation of 30 businessmen and government officials.
(Diario Financiero 12/7)

Honduras

¶2. Headline: "Mercosur Ignores Elections in Honduras and Once Again Calls for Zelaya's Reinstatement" The Mexican and Colombian representatives showed their discontent over the presidents' stance and asked support for the Central American country. Chilean Foreign Minister Mariano Fernandez said "We remain in attentiveness and support the intents to restore President Zelaya, the reestablishment of the constitutional and democratic normality in Honduras." (El Mercurio 12/9)

Local

¶3. Six days prior to the presidential election in Chile, Judge Alejandro Madrid, who is investigating the death of former President Eduardo Frei Montalva (1982) indicted six people and characterized the case as "homicide." Judge Madrid stated that former President Frei died from "the gradual incorporation of unconventional substances" and the "placing of a product called Transfer Factor, which was at an experimental stage and (...) had not been certified or authorized by the Food and Drug Administration in the U.S." Among those charged as presumed authors are Dr. Patricio Silva --President Frei's Under Secretary of Health and responsible for conducting a second surgery on the victim--, President Frei's personal driver, and an intelligence former agent. A physician who worked for the Pinochet regime's intelligence agency (DINA) was accused as accomplice, while two other surgeons were indicted as accessory after the fact. Judge Madrid said he does not rule out further indictments and that "decisions are made independently from what is occurring in the country." (All dailies 12/8)

¶4. Editorial on the latest developments involving the Frei case and Judge Madrid's ruling: "Chile needs more than that in this unprecedented case. There is so much involved that it would be convenient to take a look at the precedent established in the United States after the murder of President Kennedy (...) Only six days after his death, the Warren Commission was created to provide an account to all Americans about what had happened (...) This seems like a necessary model for this case in order to determine whether the legal elements considered by Judge Madrid are also medically, logically, and in all other aspects substantial ... (El Mercurio 12/9)

Copenhagen Conference

¶5. Headline "Obama Clarifies Doubts and Sends Signal to Copenhagen Summit" Article by Washington correspondent Alvaro Vargas Llosa stressing that by publicizing the EPA's announcement about new regulations on six greenhouse gases, President Obama is sending Copenhagen a message about his commitment. (La Tercera 12/9)

U.S.-Latin America

¶6. Opinion column by international commentator Andres Oppenheimer "Honeymoon is Over" "Some romances are short lasting...

The controversy between the United States and Brazil over the November 29 elections in Honduras is the latest in a series of clashes... In the last few weeks, the elections in Honduras, Brazil's open support to the Iranian regime and the debate over the Colombia-Washington agreement allowing the presence of American troops in Colombian military bases has put an end to the romance... My opinion: Obama will prevail over Lula on the Honduran crisis. The 27 European Union nations are already leaning towards the U.S. stance of acknowledging the elections... Nevertheless, it all seems to indicate that Washington and South America will not go back to their idyll of some months ago. Obama was applauded by everybody for being different from President George W. Bush's political arrogance. But not being Bush is no substitution to an active and efficient policy in Latin America. If Obama does not give further attention to the region, it is difficult to think about a romance revival." (El Mercurio 12/9)

¶7. Opinion piece by political scientist and former Ambassador Boris Yopo headlined, "The United States and Latin America" "Obama can still be a relevant actor in the region, but one ought to be realistic over the other actors and powers that intervene and neutralize many of the policies that the current administration wishes to implement." (Estrategia 12/9)

SIMONS